

## **WOLF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

11/19/2013 Wausau Howard Johnson Hotel

**Introductions** - Bill Vander Zouwen thanked the committee members, invited speakers, and the public for their attendance at the meeting. Three invited speakers will present information and after each presentation, the committee will discuss issues related to each topic. Time will be allotted at the end of the meeting for the public to comment on issues discussed. A summary of discussion topics for the meeting were presented including the public and wolf tag holders opinion surveys; wolf depredation; and wildlife, cattle, and wolf disease issues. The administration has agreed that the development of the wolf management plan will take longer than the previous December 2014 deadline. The 2013 harvest rules and regulations will remain the same during the 2014 season but the goal is to develop the wolf management plan in time to implement regulation changes for the 2015 harvest season. Committee members were thanked for their increased time commitment resulting from the wolf management plan deadline extension and for their help in developing the plan. A request was made that all attendees respect individual opinions and each person's right to provide input.

**Wolf Impacts on Livestock** - Information and opinions in this section were provided by Dr. Greg Palmquist, contract veterinarian representing TNT ranch. Dr. Palmquist made the following points in his presentation:

### **Background**

- Dr. Palmquist has 31 years of veterinary practice experience and has been observing cattle depredation since the late 1980s. He was a past member of the Wolf Science Committee, developed an independent study on calf depredation, and currently works with farmers to help them maximize profitability in the cattle industry.

### **TNT Ranch History**

- TNT ranch is located north of Danbury and has received one of the highest total depredation reimbursements because of the large size of their cattle operation and location relative to wolf packs.
- Dr. Palmquist has worked with this family-owned farm since 1985 and has overseen the slow expansion of the herd to over 700 cows during the past 15 years.
- The farm is located on the edge of woods in farm country.
- In the 1990s, TNT ranch had occasional cattle losses to wolves; around 5% of calves in 1990s, 7.5% in 2000, 21% in 2001, 25% in 2002, and 26% in 2003. When statewide wolf population reached 250 wolves, depredation losses began to increase although management options were limited because of the protected status of wolves.
- In 2002, Dr. Palmquist was asked to do work-ups on calves and found an increase in pneumonia resulting from stress; calves were vaccinated. During a 14-day period, 11 calves disappeared and were never found. Calf carcasses began appearing at TNT ranch, although they were not eaten. The cattle herd would congregate at the center of pastures, rather than spreading out and feeding, during the day time, and would be bellowing. Less cows were becoming pregnant and decreased

weight of calves was noticed, which cut into profits. Cattle on other ranches that Dr. Palmquist contracted with did not display these same behaviors.

- Depredation at TNT ranch caused hardships on the family as they had to get up in the middle of the night to respond to cattle distress.
- Dr. Palmquist attended a practitioners meeting and heard presentations that farmers can cause predation responses in cattle through increased disturbance with farm activities. Recommendations were that farmers need to adjust practices to minimize these stresses.

#### Neosporosis

- Dr. Palmquist provided a background on neosporosis; a protozoan disease which causes abortions in cattle.
- Canines carry the parasite and shed cysts in feces which may be consumed by cattle. There is no known vaccine or treatment for the disease.
- At TNT ranch, the prevalence of the disease is 30% of the cattle.
- Work is needed to keep wolves out of TNT pastures as they are potential carriers of the disease.

#### Dr. Palmquist Recommendations

- When revising the wolf management plan, consider that family-owned farms are increasing in size to compete in an increasingly commercialized industry.
- Beef cattle are not profitably raised in confinement; they require large pasture. Data has shown that feed lots are not the solution to depredation issues and result in lower quality cattle.
- Calves will sell for \$1,000-1,500, so the loss of 1 or 2 calves is a sizeable economic loss for farmers.
- There are cattle herds within 15 miles of TNT ranch that do not have issues with wolf depredation. This highlights that depredation is often localized and requires localized solutions.
- Cattle dogs are not a solution for keeping wolves out of cattle pastures as they too may carry and spread neosporosis.

#### Questions & Comments from individual Advisory Committee members (do not represent consensus opinion in the committee):

- Wolf depredation at TNT ranch was an early case of depredation in Wisconsin and the DNRs response was inadequate. The DNR lacked tools to remove/euthanize depredating wolves at this time due to the federally protected status of wolves.
- How does the Wolf Advisory Committee (WAC) disseminate information to the public regarding depredation so information is not merely provided and spread through blogs (i.e., minimize the impact of blog postings such as “the DNR managers are terrible” or “farmers are terrible land managers”)?
  - When the DNR helps a land owner, get the message out. The DNR currently puts monthly reports on the wolf management webpage. Work hard to get info out to the public including dates, farms, situations, actions taken, and maps of depredation incidents.
- A big problem with wolf depredations is the public’s disconnect regarding where their food comes from.

- The loss of calves is also a loss of future calves that weren't produced.
- Promoting the ecosystem benefits of wolves does not help the depredation situation. Some members do not believe this is a message that the WAC needs to send to the public although others believe it is an important message to send to the public.
- Many of the reports that Dr. Palmquist cited occurred in or prior to 2003. The DNR did not have authority to implement depredation control during this time and has implemented many more controls in recent years.
- The DNR has issued depredation permits but they only work if the farms have staff to fill the tags.
- What is the prevalence of neosporosis on the farms that Dr. Palmquist works? 25% of farms have the disease.
- Wisconsin is the only state in the nation that pays for missing calves. There wasn't a problem with wolf depredation prior to the 1980s but it became a problem later on. Once Dr. Palmquist and the TNT ranch brought it to the DNR's attention, then a reimbursement program was established.
- The DNR's hands were tied in the use of lethal controls for several years prior to delisting, so the DNR was not able to remove depredating wolves at TNT ranch.
- On another case farm, the DNR has implemented significant wolf control and it has significantly reduced depredation.
- Wolf depredation does not cause problems at an industry-level, only to individual farmers. Most problems that Dr. Palmquist cited occurred prior to delisting and not since. A broad-scale reduction of wolves is not an effective solution for reducing depredation on individual farms.
- Dr. Palmquist does not have information on the prevalence of neosporosis throughout the remainder of Wisconsin. Dr. Lindsey Long cited that in the Great Lakes region, prevalence of neosporosis is only 6% in wolves. Most cases of neosporosis in cattle result from domestic dogs or from infected cattle being introduced to a herd. Dr. Palmquist mentioned that his main point was that wolves are an uncontrolled source of the disease.
- Improvements need to be made to get all depredation information out to the public in a timely manner. Many people hear about negative interactions through informal reports; this is not always an appropriate dissemination tool for depredation issues.
- Must try to avoid cases where wolf packs disappear mysteriously.
- Wolves and people don't mix.
- Not all of the public feels this way. It is the minority of wolf packs that cause problems with depredation. It is not accurate to say wolves and people cannot coexist.
- Removal of cattle dogs from dairy farms solved the problem with neosporosis. This may not work in the cattle industry because of the understanding that canines carry the disease.
- The WAC will have discussions on how to help farmers with depredation problems at future meetings.
- Farmers or their agents can currently trap coyotes on private farms year-round to minimize neosporosis but cannot do so with wolves.
- State statutes allow compensation for wolf depredation but do not do so for other losses such as those to disease.

- Everyone needs to understand that there are going to be losses in any industry. The goal should be to decide on a management plan that can minimize the problems. Wolves and farmers are both here to stay and we do not want farmers to go back to taking care of their own depredation problems (i.e., unregulated killing of wolves). Work to find better ways to manage and minimize problems but there will always be some level of problems, and farmers do realize this.
- The goal is to have a new wolf management plan written so it can impact management for the 2015 season.

**Wildlife Diseases of Concern with Wolves** - Information and opinions in this section were provided by Dr. Lindsay Long, Wildlife Health Section, DNR.

Presentation on wolf health issues

- Provided background, mission, and partner agencies of the Wildlife Health Team; importance of disease research, overlap of diseases with humans, emerging disease, and methods for prevention of disease transmission.
- Canine distemper virus background was provided.
- Parvovirus - persistent in the environment for up to 6 months.
- Sarcoptic mange - can cause significant distress to individuals.
- Anaplasmosis - an emerging tick-borne disease and its impacts are currently unknown. Humans and dogs are hosts.
- Echinococcosis (tapeworms).
- Toxoplasmosis - definitive hosts are felids but a recent study documented the disease in wolves. Probably will not impact populations, only individuals.
- Giardiasis - wolves will consume beavers and contract the disease.
- Leptospirosis - impacts rodent and so it may impact wolves.
- Rabies - dumb and furious rabies. Rabies has not been documented in wolves. Wisconsin has two strains of rabies; skunk and bat rabies.
- Canine adenovirus - causes liver disease in canines and exposure has been shown in other wolf populations.

Comments and Questions from Advisory Committee members:

- What is the current disease status in wolves and what is the effect on population density? 90% of adult wolves show exposure to parvovirus, although this is a good sign as it indicates that they contracted the disease and survived; produced antibodies. Prevalence of distemper is lower. Diagnosis of mange is difficult as other disease may produce similar clinical signs.
- What is the effect of mange on wolves? Fox are highly susceptible to mange and develop symptoms quickly. Mange is contagious to wolves although not to the point of fox. Not typically spread pack to pack as packs do not associate closely. Impacts of mange to individuals results in decrease thermoregulation ability, but mange has little impact at the population-level. 9% of necropsied wolves and 8% of research captured animals had symptoms consistent with mange.
- Are other wolf populations around North America limited by disease? To some extent in Yellowstone, Canada, and Isla Royal.

- Recommendations on the response and prevention of disease can be included in the plan from Wildlife Health Section.
- Is there any data on wolves propagating the spread of CWD? Some research on cougar predation on elk and mule deer in CWD endemic areas out west has been done. Some modeling of wolf impacts on deer populations in the CWD management zone has been conducted and can be included in the plan from Wildlife Health Section.
- What is the impact of wildlife density on disease; are there certain diseases that have a threshold of exposure of disease in wolf populations or threshold for management response? Wildlife Health Section may wish to develop and include this in their plan.

**Furbearer and Wolf Trapping** - Information and opinions in this section were provided by John Olson, Furbearer Specialist, DNR.

#### Trappers Education

- Invited to speak as trapping is a large part of the wolf harvest.
- Provided background on trapper education program agenda.
- Trapper education attendance has increased prior to the wolf trapping season, and the challenge is finding enough Saturdays in between the date when successful harvest tag applicants are announced and the opening day of the harvest season.
- Ethics and respect towards wildlife and other harvesters is a key component of the class, along with season dates, trapping scenarios, rules and regulations, trapping demonstrations, and expert guest speakers regarding trap sets to minimize non-target captures.
- Wisconsin Trappers Association (WTA) wants wolf trapper education class to be mandatory for wolf trappers. WTA wants people who are setting traps to understand them and have respect for them. WTA will have county resolutions this year requesting mandatory trapper education for wolf trappers. WTA considers this important, because WTA wants to minimize trapping incidents with pets.
- DNR is keeping a record of wolf trapper education participants; if the class is made mandatory, those who have already completed the class may be grandfathered into the system.
- 16 years of trapping incidents data exists. <10 trapping incidents occurred per year for past 14 years. Trapping incidents increased this year. 75% of incidents involving pets - the trappers had permission to be on the private lands. 25% of incidents involving pets - the pet owners did not have permission to be on private lands (trespassing).
- In 2013, to date, 14 incidents have occurred; 11 with footholds. 5 incidents involved hunting dogs and 6 involved non-hunting dogs. No permanent or fatal injuries to dogs have occurred. Only 4 incidents were caused by known wolf sets. 2 trappers were exempt from trapper education, and 2 trappers had previously taken the class. There were no legal violations of the law in the 4 incidents involving known wolf sets. The DNR suspects that more incidents will be reported as the season progresses and will continue to monitor and record reports.
- Fur values are up in recent years so interest in trapping has increased.
- Expect that wolf harvest related to trapping has increased as trappers want to beat zone closures.
- Looking at doing multiple trappers education workshops each Saturday as more people are interested in participating in classes and as more people are trained in teaching the classes.

- Recommends pushing the application date for wolf tags back to December, similar to the bear application process, to allow more weekends for holding classes in between the time when successful applicants are announced and the start of the wolf harvest season.
- CITES tag issuance must be approved in federal register. Next year, rules should change to allow all states to apply for CITES authority which will allow states to enter furs into international trade.

#### Best Management Practices (BMP)

- The DNR uses BMPs as an educational tool, not to set regulations.
- BMPs are the best tools that pass international injury and efficiency scores for minimizing problems.
- BMPs are established through international agreements; Canada-Russia-Euronations-USA.
- International community meets annually to discuss what the other countries are doing with BMP development.
- With the establishment of the wolf trapping BMP, BMPs exist for all furbearer species in Wisconsin.
- BMPs are constantly changing.
- USA has an agreement with Canada to share all data and research regarding BMPs.
- Canada has ban on foothold traps and do not use body grip traps for wolves. Canada is interested in footholds for wolves and they are testing their efficiency for BMPs in USA.
- The USA is utilizing depredation trapping to test trap types and are conducting necropsies on animals captured by various types of traps.
- Current research focusing on MB-650 traps; will take a couple of years to test each trap type.
- The problem with a single North American BMP is that wolves in the Great Lakes region are smaller than those located in Alaska and Canada. The international community is recommending one BMP for wolves although it will provide guidelines within the BMP for trapping in different parts of North America.
- Provided an explanation of trapping regulations and jaw spread regulations.
- Russia filed a formal derogation for wolves in order to test the use of foothold traps in northern Russia for 5 years as they are 3-times over their population goal.
- The US Trade Department is involved with BMPs as trapping and selling of furs is an international trade issue.
- Cable restraint use is still an issue in the USA.
- Humane tools exist >7" that could be used later in the harvest season when bears and bird hunters are no longer active in Wisconsin forests. Does the DNR/state want to make the use of 7" or smaller traps on dry land a season-long issue in Wisconsin?

#### Comments and Questions from Advisory Committee members:

- Use of private certified trappers for depredation removals on farms in WI (as are used in MN); there has been concern regarding conflicts with hunters and trappers for access to harvest tags. WAC can propose this as a recommendation.
- Will wolf trapper education be incorporated into the current trapper ed. program? This is unknown although wolf trapper education will likely be a stand-alone class initially.

- Will other state's trapper education certifications be grandfathered in to Wisconsin's certification? This is unknown although the DNR currently accepts certifications for other states which have similar course requirements (courses with both classroom and field components).
- What is the DNR's role in releasing incidentally trapped wolves? The DNR encourages trappers to contact them and allow them to place a radio collar on individuals. There may be a misperception in the trappers association that trappers should not call the DNR but rather release the animals. The WTA magazine, however, had a cover story article about the DNR collaring incidentally captured wolves in the past year. The message could possibly be reiterated to the public.
- Why can't foothold traps be used on dry land closure areas that are designed to protect martens? If they were to be allowed, discussions would need to occur regarding administrative rules dictating pan tension. Regulations would need to be developed to allow them in designated marten areas and there would likely be issues regarding BMPs and injuries to martens.
- The US Forest Service has received several complaints regarding bird dogs issues with wolf traps. People were generally very angry. The DNR currently has a reporting system for incidents which collects 17 pieces of data for each incident.
- The wolf harvest season opening date is set in state statute. What is the WAC's role in changing this date? The WAC may make recommendations but does not have the authority to implement a change. If the WAC would like to recommend a change, they can do so. Individual members could ask the legislature to draft a bill; however the DNR administration does not ask legislators to change laws.
- Who fills depredation tags when they are issued? Landowner shooting permits can be issued from March to October. After October, landowners with depredation tags may trap on private property. Landowners can designate up to 2 agents to fill tags. There is a program to certify individuals to trap depredation wolves and a trained individual may come out and fill tags as well.
- The WTA believes that the opening date of Oct. 15 is too early because wolf pelts are not in prime condition yet. They would like to see the season open later.

**Wolf Permit Applicants Opinion Survey** - Discussion directed by Brian Dhuey, Natural Resource Research Scientist, DNR.

Comments and questions by Advisory Committee members:

- The DNR administration does not recommend an agenda pertaining to the timing of the wolf harvest as it is a legislative issue. If the WAC wishes to recommend that questions pertaining to the season timing are included in the wolf harvester questionnaire, they may do so.
- This survey is for tag holders and is separate from the general public opinion survey being developed.
- The survey asks all of the same questions as the 2012 survey, although a few new questions were added regarding the use of dogs, and the timing and reasons for when trappers began trapping.
- A question could be asked regarding the transfer of wolf tags.
- Would certified trapper wolf removals be used in lieu of USDA WS removals or would they be in lieu of the public harvest quota? Rewording the question pertaining to certified trappers may be necessary. This is really 2 management issues; 1) proactive control areas and 2) use of certified trappers to control depredation. Would these permits be specific to a period of time or weapon?

- Keep the survey as simple as possible so the public does not interpret that the DNR has authority to change the season structure. Ask questions that get a “support or don’t support” response.
- Include a question regarding instituting a split harvest season (similar to the bobcat harvest), or a trapping vs. hunting split.
- A question exists on the survey regarding reducing tag issuance to extend the harvest season. Equal amount of people are calling asking for more permits as they are less. Include a question to determine what the public wants; more or less.
- Personal safety question; does the public feel they need to carry a firearm/sidearm to be safe in the outdoors? This is probably not an appropriate question for the successful applicant survey as harvesters already carry firearms when pursuing wolves.
- Sighting of collared wolves question; is this question misleading? The DNR is not using the answers to this question for analysis of population abundance. It is designed to determine how many hunters pass up wolves with collars because 1) they don’t want to impact the wolf study by killing research animals or 2) they don’t want to harvest a wolf with a wear mark in their fur from the collar. Some WAC committee members believe that this question will be misleading or that the DNR is going to try to use the data to develop population estimates. The question will be moved from the hunting portion of the survey to the trapping portion of the survey. The question will be reworded to inquire if trappers captured any collared wolves and if so, did they release it and why.
- Question regarding whether hunters shot/injured any wolves that you were unable to retrieve; designed to determine the impact harvest on the population.
- Should zone-specific tags be issued such as those for bear and turkey? A question will be added to the survey. Zones allow for more control of hunting pressure and effort and may offer more opportunities for hunters because the harvest could be more easily split up rather than focused on the zones deemed to be the “best” by the public. Many pros and cons exist. Law enforcement believes that unit-specific tags will make investigation and enforcement of illegal reporting easier. This may upset some of the public as they will want the current option allowing them to access any zone.
- Law enforcement has received complaints regarding trappers moving from one zone (following its closure) into the adjacent zone and issues related to trappers placing traps too close to already placed traps, and trappers reporting an increase in stolen traps as trapping pressure increased.
- Should a question regarding support/opposition for a zone with an unlimited quota be included (i.e., a zone where over the counter permits are issued)? The question may be asked but it should be included in the general public survey as it pertains to the entire public.
- Include a question regarding whether hunters/trappers moved into your zone after the closure of other zones.
- The survey results may be developed by the June/July WAC meeting although it may take longer. The WAC will need to simultaneously work to develop recommendations and options prior to receiving the results from the survey so as to not delay the process.

**Public Wolf Opinion Survey** - Discussion directed by Bob Holsman, Natural Resource Research Scientist, DNR.

Comments and Questions from Advisory Committee members:



- Designed to allow the public to provide input on wolf harvest and population management. The WAC members may not like all of the questions but it is designed to allow all the public to provide their inputs.
- The current draft provides questions in two different ways, because the survey will be delivered to focus groups in order to determine the least biased way of asking each question (i.e., determine how the wording of each question is interpreted by the public).
- Today's focus is on the big picture of the survey and time will be allowed at other meetings or through future correspondence to work on the wording of individual questions.
- The survey presents wolf population estimates developed from two different seasons of the year; this is inconsistent and confusing. The question will be reworded.
- The color-scheme of the relative distribution map did not print well on everyone's printers and will be adjusted.
- Data numbers in a couple of the tables do not match and will be adjusted.
- The order of the survey is flawed. Public education portions of the survey are misleading and should not be included. Ask simple questions and do not try to do public information and a survey at the same time.
- Relative distribution maps may be misleading as some of the counties may not match harvest numbers. It is not a map of harvest but rather a map of relative county area covered by wolf packs. The relative distribution map on the front of the survey may alienate some respondents as they will instinctively think the data is wrong.
- The biggest concern for some of the public may be safety but a safety-related question isn't asked until question 27. Should this question be moved to the start? No objection to moving the question forward although the WACs authority is with regulations and populations, so that is why the question was asked after the questions pertaining to authorities of the WAC.
- Why does the survey include a question regarding bears and coyotes; seems inappropriate for a wolf survey and it may minimize public responses to wolves? The question is designed to determine whether public fears towards carnivores are general fears or if specific fears towards one or multiple species exists? This question is similar to a question in the bear survey and will allow for cross-referencing.
- Discussion on question 6; designed to determine how active the public will be regarding wolf management. Will this question alienate people, i.e., will they feel the information isn't any of the DNRs business and thus not complete the survey? The question does not stand alone but correlates with Q1 and Q7. Much disagreement on the inclusion of this question in the survey; some feel that all it gets at is whether a person is an extremist or a squeaky wheel. Others support the question, because the results will be a bell-shaped curve of respondents; some will be on the extremes but most will likely be someplace in the middle of the bell. The question will be reworded. If people haven't considered in the past participating in public protest rallies and writing their state representative, will this question push them towards doing so?
- Should the survey include a question regarding funding sources for depredation reimbursement going into the future? The WAC can recommend discussion on this subject in the future. Survey questions are currently drafted if the WAC decides to include them. The administration does not want to present the issue as it requires a legislative decision.

- Using over-winter minimum counts might be misleading as UW research has shown that the wolf population may be as high as 1,500 wolves. If the public views this information as misleading, they may not complete the survey. The wording of this question can be changed although some committee members oppose providing hard numbers. It was also noted that these same estimates were considered by the WAC to be useful and accurate prior to delisting and have only become a source of debate amongst committee members since the harvest began.
- Table of depredation payments in survey; payments made during the pre-delisting time period must be denoted as the numbers do not correlate to numbers following the implementation of active conflict mitigation methods.
- The focus groups that review the survey are probably better measures for how the survey questions will be interpreted compared to the WAC members.
- The WAC needs to get to the point in which all committee members are comfortable with the survey so when in the future the WAC uses the data, all members are comfortable with its usability and validity.
- What is the process for selecting survey participants? Participants will be selected randomly by address based on population census data with oversampling in areas of the state where the relative wolf distribution is higher.
- The general public may not share the same level of interest in wolf management as the WAC members and so if the survey is too long, they may not be inclined to complete it.
- The WAC needs agreement on numbers or thresholds regarding management decisions based on farm depredation (a threshold of farms in which anything greater will require a management decision), a threshold of hound depredation (a threshold for how many hound depredations will require a management decision), etc. The WAC needs agreement so they can develop management objectives.
- For questions which have multiple options in the survey, there should be a “support all” option.
- UW researchers have expressed concerns that the random sampling methodology for choosing survey participants may be biased towards men.
- In past WAC meetings, the committee agreed that they need better information regarding the social carrying capacity of wolves. Some of the public survey questions are designed to gather this information. Survey questions are designed to provide some information prior to gathering a response.
- Although some committee members do not want hard numbers in survey, the survey was designed to include numbers for the dollar values paid for depredation reimbursements. Dollar values are more easily understandable whereas the public might consider depredation a non-issue if the data is present as a percent of farms (i.e., less than 1% of farms have had depredation claims in response to wolves).
- If the WAC decides to shorten the survey, questions regarding public perceptions of the DNRs values towards wolves may be removed.
- Question 20 regarding Tribal viewpoints towards wolves: specify that this information is in regards to tribes in Wisconsin.
- If the question regarding the public’s fear of wolves, bears, and coyotes is done as a rating system, it will need to include an option for “fear all equally.”

- The completion timeline for the hunter opinion survey is shorter than the public opinion survey, so the WAC cannot wait too long to finalize the public opinion survey questions as several questions are included in both surveys for cross referencing.
- How should questions be worded in order to present information on management zones so the WAC can gather useful data on whether change is needed regarding the structure of management zones?

#### **Comments from Public in Audience**

- Survey questions largely reflect the special interests of WAC committee members and lack the interests of non-consumptive wildlife users and non-profit conservation organizations. There are very few references in the survey regarding the value of wolves in ecosystem functioning.
- The wolf management plan should focus on minimizing the trapping of non-target species as research in other states has shown that many non-target animals are release injured or dead.
- Livestock depredation is extremely low considering the number of farms and the number of livestock on the landscape. Depredation should not drive the decision-making process regarding harvest.
- A request was made to allow public comment following each speaker presentation, rather than at the end of the meeting.

#### **Varia: Additional Comments**

A thank you was given to the DNR for providing more resources for the volunteer tracking survey. If greater public participation in the training class is achieved, better survey data may result.

- Should the DNR eliminate or reduce the fee for participation in the volunteer tracking class in order to get more people involved? In 2012 the time requirements were reduced and free classes are already available. For classes that require an enrollment fee, the goal is not to turn a profit but rather to cover the costs for rented facilities and provided lunches. A nominal fee (\$15-25) helps manage the number of participants but mainly covers the cost for facility rental and provided lunches.
- There are higher-cost volunteer tracker trainings on the DNR website through partnering groups. These are not operated by the DNR.
- The WAC should have a discussion on what is primary and secondary wolf habitat based on suitability and changes in agriculture.

**Next Meeting:** The next WAC meeting will be on Dec. 11.

**January Meeting:** The January WAC meeting will be on Jan. 21.